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TITLE:

THE VALUE OF THE GERMAN CONCEPT OF
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND CIVIC EDUCATION
- INNERE FUEHRUNG -
IN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

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Executive Summary

- Title:** The value of the German concept of leadership development and civic education – Innere Fuehrung – in counterinsurgency operations
- Author:** Lieutenant Colonel (GS) Marc U. Cropp, German Army
- Thesis:** Though the concept of Innere Fuehrung evolved in the context of the rearmament of the Federal Republic of Germany after World War II, the concept possess a high value for current counterinsurgency operations.
- Discussion:** The current operations in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrate that technology and overwhelming firepower alone is insufficient to support eroded nations in their struggle against insurgents. Counterinsurgency efforts rely on the soldiers on the ground. It is the way soldiers and Marines operate amongst the people that will decide the success or failure of the endeavor to support these countries. Acting in accordance with the nation's values and being able to take initiative are decisive qualities in counterinsurgency operations. These attributes cannot be assigned. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a command climate that fosters ethical behavior in accordance with the nation's values already in daily service in garrison. Soldiers have to experience ethical standards and the freedom to execute initiative on a day-to-day basis to be prepared for operations.
- Conclusion:** The concept of Innere Führung provides with the main areas of application: leadership, civic education, and law and military discipline the core elements to educate, train, and prepare military leaders and soldiers for the present demanding tasks within counterinsurgency operations.

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Table of Contents

	Page
DISCLAIMER	III
PREFACE	V
INTRODUCTION.....	1
THE CONCEPT OF INNERE FUEHRUNG	3
Objectives of Innere Fuehrung.....	3
The Central Element.....	4
LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS IN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS	4
POTENTIAL OF INNERE FUEHRUNG	7
Leadership	8
Civic Education.....	12
Law and Military Discipline	14
MISSION COMMAND AND JUDGMENT	16
GAINING TRUST – THE ESSENCE OF COUNTERINSURGENCY	17
CONCEPT AND REALITY - INNERE FUEHRUNG IN PRACTICE.....	17
Report of the Parliamentary Commissioner “Wehrbeauftragter”	17
ISAF 2006	18
CONCLUSIONS.....	19
ENDNOTES.....	21
BIBLIOGRAPHY	23
APPENDIX A: Range of Military Operations.....	26
APPENDIX B: German Legal Status of Military Personnel Act.....	27
APPENDIX C: Service Values	28

Preface

Inspired by my mentor, Dr. Paolo Tripodi, the Donald Bren Ethics and Leadership Chair at Marine Corps University, it was a pleasure to work on the German concept of leadership development and civic education. The concept of Innere Führung was developed under rather different conditions than the military is faced today. Therefore, it was interesting to assess if the idea of the concept still meets today's requirements. The study does not focus on the application of the Innere Führung within the German Forces, but analyses the elements of Innere Führung in the context of counterinsurgency theory. The basis for this analysis was Field Manual 3-24 "Counterinsurgency", which provides the principles and guidelines for today's operational environment.

“Those who defend human dignity must treat others with dignity.”

*General Wolf Count Baudissin
(1907–1993)*

- one of the founding fathers of Innere Fuehrung -

Introduction

Innere Fuehrung became a trademark of the German armed forces, the "Bundeswehr", since the term was introduced in 1953 and the formal articulation of the ideas of an ethically motivated citizen-soldier for which it stands.¹ In order to understand the integration of the Bundeswehr into the constitutional system of the Federal Republic of Germany and the development of Innere Fuehrung, a historical approach is important.

Under National Socialism, the German armed forces were misused and at the same time guilty of involvement. This must never be allowed to happen again. In the late 1940's, following the disastrous end of the second World War, it was therefore necessary to redefine the relationship between the state and the armed forces.

The first democratic nation state on German soil, the Weimar Republic, inherited armed forces with deep-rooted militaristic traditions. These forces had an internal structure that was based on pre-democratic convictions from the Wilhelmine era. The Reichswehr of the Weimar Republic was a state within a state, while the Wehrmacht of the Third Reich increasingly developed into a compliant instrument of National Socialism. The Bundeswehr was the first German armed force to be created in a free democracy based on the rule of law.

The rebirth of democracy after 1945, which led to the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, inevitably also led to a new start for the armed forces. It is in this specific historical and political situation that the concept of Innere Fuehrung has its roots. The concept of Innere Fuehrung can only be understood against the background of this new relationship between state, society and the armed forces, which is significantly different from the historical situation of the Reichswehr and the Wehrmacht. One of the aims was to prevent the

newly established Bundeswehr from adopting a questionable and burdensome military self-image.

After World War II and with the Cold War looming on the horizon, many countries began studying issues concerning the internal fabric and fighting motivation of modern armed forces. In Germany, this subject was discussed during a meeting at Himmerod Abbey in the Eifel in October 1950. Thoughts on the contribution of the Federal Republic of Germany to Western European defense were laid down in what is known as the Himmerod Memorandum.²

When the Bundeswehr was established after 1955, the introduction of Innere Fuehrung was a revolutionary concept with a fundamentally new approach. It represented an intellectual component in the reestablishment of armed forces that – in an arms race and facing a nuclear threat – would have to prove their worth as a NATO member.

The security environment has changed since the development and introduction of the concept of Innere Fuehrung. Bipolarity is long gone, and transnational terrorists have emerged as a major threat. National security is defended on foreign soil in support of weak governments against agents of chaos. The focus of military forces has turned from traditional defense towards counterinsurgency operations. Therefore, this paper presents the question: Is the concept of Innere Fuehrung still relevant in contemporary conditions as the military forces are faced within the operations today? To answer this question and to estimate the value of Innere Fuehrung it is at necessary to identify the key factors of leadership and ethics for promising counterinsurgency operations and in a second step to assess how the concept of Innere Fuehrung meets and supports these factors.

The Concept of Innere Fuehrung

Objectives of Innere Fuehrung

The concept of Innere Fuehrung has multiple dimensions. The concept includes more than just a philosophy of leadership; it rather refers to military structure and principles of behavior.³ Therefore, it is hard to describe or summarize the concept in one sentence. Since the early days of the Bundesrepublik Deutschland and the founding of the Bundeswehr within the democratic state, the objectives of Innere Fuehrung have not changed.

First, the concept of Innere Fuehrung is to legitimize the presence of military forces and to clarify the rationale behind military service. Innere Fuehrung provides ethical, legal, political and social reasons for military action, and at the same time provides clarity to the purpose of the military mission, particularly when it comes to operations abroad. Second, Innere Fuehrung has an integrative dimension. The concept is to maintain and to foster the integration of the Bundeswehr in the state and society, to promote understanding of the mission of the Bundeswehr as part of Germany's security and defense policy, and to ensure the active involvement of soldiers in the permanent transformation of armed forces. The third dimension focuses on the soldier's motivation. Innere Fuehrung is to strengthen the willingness of soldiers to perform their duties thoroughly, to render conscientious obedience, to assume responsibility, to cooperate, and to maintain troop cohesion and discipline. The fourth dimension is about shaping the internal order. Innere Fuehrung is to create an internal order for the armed forces that conforms to the law and provides the necessary effectiveness for mission performance. These four dimensions set the frame for the service within Bundeswehr at all places at every time.⁴

The Central Element

The central element of Innere Fuehrung is the guiding principle of the “citizen in uniform.” This principle illustrates the ideal Bundeswehr soldier, namely one who is a free individual, a responsible citizen, and ready at all times to carry out his mission. This guiding principle of the “citizen in uniform” affects every soldier irrespective of rank or status. However, it is special responsibility of every military leader to behave in such a way to set with a living example of Innere Fuehrung and frame the daily service in accordance with the concept Innere Fuehrung.⁵

Leaders are regarded by their soldiers as the chief representatives of Innere Fuehrung during day to day activities and on operations. Military leaders exert a major influence on esprit de corps and shape the work environment by leading prudently, setting an example, and training with passion. Their actions engender the trust of their soldiers. Leadership, civic education, law and military discipline are the *main areas* in which superiors apply Innere Fuehrung.⁶ In these areas leaders can exert a direct and long-lasting influence on their soldiers. The *main areas* are an ideal platform for superiors to clearly develop and express both their freedom of action as part of mission command and the influential nature of their personality. In addition to these three main areas of application, there are *other areas* in which essential contributions are made to the success of Innere Fuehrung.⁷ Military leaders must take the *other areas* into account on a case by case basis.

Leadership and Ethics in Counterinsurgency Operations

The latest doctrinal publication on counterinsurgency, U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps field manual FM 3-24, highlights the importance and summarizes the key leadership qualifications and ethical standards in a counterinsurgency environment. Chapter seven of the

field manual incorporates the experience of the past years in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as lessons identified from former small wars like the Malayan Emergency between 1948 and 1960, the Algerian War of Independence between 1952 and 1962, and the Vietnam War between 1958 and 1975. Most of the content in chapter seven is obvious and follows the code of conduct of civilized military forces in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas. It is, however, the face of war that makes the difference between counterinsurgency operations and conventional war and therefore leadership and ethics so difficult. In analogies, it is like a boxer prepared for a boxing match, finding himself blindfolded with one fist tied at the back amongst an innocent crowd against an opponent with a knife.

The leadership challenge in counterinsurgency has three dimensions: First, it is the responsibility of military leaders to execute the mission in accordance with the national values. Second, leaders must provide a command climate that fosters initiative on all levels of command. Third, leaders at all level of command must be willing and able to take initiative and responsibility.

Military leaders “are expected to act ethically and in accordance with shared national values and Constitutional principles.”⁸ It is on leaders to exercise military judgment in difficult and ambiguous situations on the behalf of the nation they serve. Additionally, leaders are responsible for the action taken by their subordinates. It is on commanders - but not exclusively on them – to “maintain the ‘moral high ground’ in all their units’ deeds and words.”⁹ To achieve this aim it is a precondition that every leader is aware of his responsibility, familiar – knows and acts in accordance - with the nation’s values and able to exercise military judgment. To exercise military judgment, a soldier needs to know the purpose of his mission and must be able to bring the purpose of the mission and effects of the action in balance with the fixed set of values.

Military judgment based on ethical standards does not appear with promotion; it has to be taught, practiced in training, and practiced in daily routine.

Establishing a command climate that fosters initiative in a counterinsurgency environment calls for leaders who, practice mission command and control, have trust in, and are patient with their subordinates. Counterinsurgency "is a junior commander's war,"¹⁰ therefore, initiative by junior leaders is essential. Providing general guidance and the commander's intent provides subordinates the necessary path and freedom to exercise initiative to accomplish the mission successfully. Trust replaces micromanagement that averts initiative, but trust also allows leaders to be aside subordinates in decisive situations without interfering in their actions and denying their initiative. Patience provides the leader the authority to interfere in situations when decisive action of senior commanders is requested without questioning the initiative by junior leaders. Establishing such a command climate is a matter of leadership but also a matter of time. Commanders need time to gain trust of their soldiers and need to get to know their subordinates.

Mission command and control is a prerequisite for initiative of subordinates, but does not support junior leaders in their will and ability to be proactive. The will to take the initiative is based on motivation. The motivation is encouraged by the command climate and the comprehension and understanding of the purpose of the mission. A "zero defects" mentality by superiors and a lack of understanding for the mission lead to opposite effect.¹¹ The ability to exercise initiative is based on knowledge gained through education and training. Education in particular is a stepping stone to success in counterinsurgency operations. Since initiative is needed most in complex situations and unknown environments, education rather than training is the prerequisite for responsible action.

FM 3-24 states that “counterinsurgency operations place the toughest of ethical demands on Soldiers, marines, and their leaders.”¹² The ethical demands are equivalent to the conduct of conventional warfare. However, because military forces are usually used abroad in support of another state, the values of that particular state have to be considered as well. In addition is it the effect that differs if common - or in the perception of the supported nation - values are violated. Therefore, every soldier has to be familiar with the nation’s values and additional values of the supported state. To act accordingly and responsibly it is essential that every soldier understands the broad context of the overall mission.¹³ Cultural awareness and understanding helps to learn about the values of the people in the supported state.

More than ever before, the operational environment requires a broader preparation for today’s missions. This includes the preparation of leaders on all levels of command as well as the single soldier.¹⁴ Individual professional development and organizational learning are essential for current and future success. However, it is not learning and education alone that makes the difference in preparing soldiers, it is the daily experience that will lead to lasting improvement. Therefore is a demand for a leadership philosophy that set the condition to support the leadership and ethics needed for counterinsurgency operations.

The Potential of Innere Fuehrung

Innere Fuehrung is not linked to any level of command. As mentioned before, it is an overarching concept of the Bundeswehr for the Bundeswehr. Therefore, it is obligatory for high ranking officers as well as for corporals, but does not end at them. It is obligatory for every serviceman. On the first glance, open communication in the sense of Innere Fuehrung makes leadership for junior leaders difficult. They are challenged by their soldiers to make the purpose

of their task clear and to set this task in context with the values of the service. It is this daily challenge that strengthens every junior leader, not only in operations, but also in the daily routine in the garrison.

The main areas of application of Innere Fuehrung - leadership, civic education and law and military order – provide the framework to achieve the purpose of a strong, motivated, and at the values of a democratic state oriented soldier.

The role of military leaders is crucial to the concept of Innere Fuehrung and its reception. Leaders are supposed to act as role models. Their influence on the spirit of their soldiers and their daily work is immense. Leaders educate by being role models and they train their personnel with passion. They have to be credible at all times.¹⁵ In order to lead, train and educate their soldiers, superiors must have three main domains: leadership, civic education, and law and military order. By making use of these main domains, superiors shape their soldiers and leave a lasting impression.¹⁶ Leadership is an attempt to translate the German expression “Menschenfuehrung.” The following paragraph describes this main domain.

Leadership

Leadership in the German Armed Forces is based on the values of the Basic Law - the German constitution. The Basic Law demands unrestricted regard for human dignity, human rights, the principles of equality, justice, responsibility, and tolerance. Leadership is a core task of all leaders in the Bundeswehr regardless of their level of command. It lays the foundations for recognition and success as a military leader. Basic principle is that “those who defend human dignity must treat others with dignity.”¹⁷ Trust is the most important basis for human coexistence and comradeship and is the key attribute of responsible leadership. Trust and comradeship have a uniting effect across all rank categories, particularly in stress situations. Trust requires insight

into human nature and sensitivity. Leaders must thus make time for the soldiers in their care. They must get to know and understand them. To do this, leaders must be open with their subordinates.¹⁸ Having a positive attitude towards others is necessary if superiors are to be responsible and open-minded. Leaders must be people persons. Because of the small number of soldiers under their responsibility, in particular unit and subunit leaders should get to know all their subordinates personally. This, however, calls for a genuine willingness to show and pay attention. Above all it requires time, which will then be unavailable elsewhere. For this reason, community events, deployments at major training areas, missions and any other opportunities that arise should be used for one-on-one contact.

Operations in particular can reveal strengths and weaknesses that have thus far remained hidden. In times of stress, danger, and challenge, things are discussed that touch on human existence. Issues such as injury, death, fear, guilt and failure must not be suppressed or played down. They must be discussed honestly and sensitively. By fostering such discussions, leaders promote ethical awareness, mutual trust, and unswerving loyalty. Not only company-level commanders, but also first sergeants must be there for their soldiers and help them with their problems and concerns. They must give top priority to the individual soldier and not to paperwork or a computer monitor. As leaders of NCOs, first sergeants shape the character of young and frequently inexperienced NCOs through their special position and by setting an example. Together with the commander, they ensure that comradeship and cohesion are maintained in the military community.¹⁹

Fuehren mit Auftrag – mission command and control – as principle, does not end with the company or platoon commander level and has for this reason influence *on* the small unit leader. The principle has to go down the chain of command to the single private. Therefore, a kind of

anticipating obedience and initiative is requested from every soldier and has to be promoted by leaders on all level of command.²⁰ This principle is in accordance with and promotes the values founded in the German Basic Law. Leadership must allow for freedom of action, active participation, and shared responsibility. For this reason, leaders must give top priority to mission command. In doing so, they must sometimes accept solutions that differ from their own. Leaders who are faced with important decisions should involve the soldiers concerned whenever possible. This increases the soldier's motivation and is an important factor in occupational satisfaction and operational readiness. Although mission command and Innere Führung have their roots in different eras of German military history, they are so closely related that mission command constitutes the style of leadership that best conforms to the principle of the "citizen in uniform." Shared responsibility is thus experienced in the pursuit of common goals.²¹

Leaders must continually explain to their subordinates the purpose and necessity of their tasks, both on their own, and in the overall scheme of things. Information about essential duty matters and regular dialogue are an integral component of leadership.²² This is especially true when preparing for demanding missions or in unexpected situations like they occur in counterinsurgency. Only individuals who are fully informed in a timely manner and who understand the purpose of the task at hand will feel that they are being taken seriously, will be able and prepared to act out of conviction in accordance with the mission, and will take into consideration wider objectives.²³

Modern leadership involves promoting teamwork. Leaders build teams for solving special tasks. These teams may deviate from existing organizational structures. Leaders must familiarize themselves with the personality, knowledge, abilities and feelings of their subordinates. They must also be aware of group dynamics. Leadership focuses equally on the heart and mind.

Leaders strengthen unit cohesion when the unit works together to overcome stressful situations.²⁴

This promotes comradeship, trust in unit performance, and esprit de corps.

Intercultural competence – the ability to deal with people from a different cultural background – increases the confidence of soldiers and promotes the acceptance of minorities in the Bundeswehr. In operations abroad, intercultural competence is also an essential prerequisite for mission accomplishment and self-protection. By demanding and promoting intercultural competence, superiors ensure that their soldiers are confident and respectful when dealing with the local population and members of other nations.²⁵ Leaders train their soldiers to be able to work in multinational units.

Soldiers who know their own limits are able to deal with the strengths and weaknesses of others. This requires critical self-assessment. Leaders must be aware that their behavior is under the constant scrutiny and influence of their military and civilian environments. They will not compromise themselves by asking their soldiers for advice or by admitting mistakes. Leaders who are honest with themselves will increase their authority as leaders. Leaders are responsible for supervising and instructing their soldiers. They ensure that laws, regulations and orders are obeyed, and they are also responsible for helping their soldiers accomplish their mission. They use supervision as an instrument to identify and acknowledge the achievements of their subordinates. Praise as well as criticism help motivate soldiers and improve their operational readiness. Leaders help shape military service through supervision and instruction that is helpful and appropriate. In this way they prevent incorrect behavior, practice modern leadership, and thus get to know their soldiers.²⁶

Civic Education

Politische Bildung (civic education) is not propaganda because civic education truly is supposed to encourage the ability of the soldiers of the Bundeswehr “how to think.” Therefore political education teaches or offers tools rather than telling a soldier “what to think.” The motivation behind such an education is to create and foster an understanding of the mission as well as of the purpose and the setting behind the mission.²⁷

Civic education in the Bundeswehr helps soldiers strengthen their knowledge of the values and norms of the Basic Law so that they better understand and accept the purpose and necessity of their service for peace, freedom and justice.²⁸ Section 33 of the German Legal Status of Military Personnel Act states that civic education is a mandatory task in the Bundeswehr.²⁹ Soldiers must not feel that their military service violates the values of the Federal Republic of Germany. They must experience during their day-to-day activities the basic values they defend as “citizens in uniform.” Civic education is thus closely related to leadership and values. Civic education provides the moral compass necessary to stay on track in counterinsurgency operations.³⁰ In addition, soldiers are informed about their rights and duties as citizens and under international law.

Civic education teaches history, clarifies political contexts, helps soldiers make judgments on political issues, improves intercultural competence, fosters a sense of values, and encourages active participation in political processes. All soldiers are obliged to stay informed about politics and to make efforts to broaden their knowledge and education in order to adhere to the guiding principle of the “citizen in uniform”.

Civic education plays an increasingly important role in missions abroad. Soldiers must be appropriately informed at an early stage about the political background, the security policy

interests, and the resulting necessity of operations. Before, during and after an operation, superiors at all levels must use civic education to ensure that their soldiers are informed about the current operation, the country of deployment, and special conditions. By doing so, superiors help their soldiers act in accordance with the intent of higher command, boost their motivation, and confirm their role as “citizens in uniform”.³¹

In order to meet the objectives of civic education, it is often necessary to study historical developments. Soldiers must learn about the development of Germany’s democratic society and the historical significance of the Basic Law. By understanding the principles of Germany’s constitution and by analyzing the past and its values, soldiers acquire benchmarks with which they can assess current political events and processes and develop an appropriate understanding of tradition within the scope of applicable guidelines. Tradition is the transmission of values and norms. It helps soldiers to define themselves and their profession. It gives them self-assurance, places their actions in a historical context, and serves as a guide for military leadership and conduct. Tradition thus plays a vital role for the Bundeswehr as an armed force on operations.

Civic education is a further key duty of all superiors and a legal obligation of disciplinary leaders. It must be implemented at every opportunity – even on operations. Leaders gain personal credibility and conviction through expertise, a reasoned and justified viewpoint of their own, and a willingness to talk and listen. In providing civic education, superiors can make use of a wide range of opportunities both inside and outside the Bundeswehr. They always remain responsible, however, for shaping the civic education of their soldiers.

Soldiers must be involved in the planning and conduct of civic education. Leaders not only teach but also encourage open, sincere and considerate discussion. Open discussions improve the ability of soldiers to make critical judgments and ensure balanced information and

viewpoints. Issues that are politically and socially controversial must be presented and discussed as such. In addition to discussing controversial political issues, superiors must also firmly oppose opinions and endeavors that betray the principles of the constitution. Civic education is aimed at soldiers of all ranks. It is an element of adult education and part of a personality development process. Its primary aim is to provide information about political issues. Wherever possible, civic education should deal with situations, experiences and conflicts that have a direct effect on soldiers.³² In this way, issues can be better presented and understood.

Bundeswehr personnel serving in a multinational environment should be familiar with the organizational principles and leadership culture of the armed forces of other nations and of non-governmental organizations. In addition, they should be acquainted with the politics, culture and other relevant aspects of operational areas. The objective here is to behave appropriately towards people from different cultural backgrounds in accordance with the values and norms of the Basic Law and the mission of the Bundeswehr. At the same time, Bundeswehr personnel in multinational environments must also respect their own leadership principles, customs and mentalities. One particularly important goal of civic education is to prepare soldiers for possible tension between human rights – which the Bundeswehr protects – and opposing cultural and social elements in operational areas.³³ This is an essential precondition for moral judgment of soldiers in a demanding counterinsurgency environment.³⁴

Law and Military Order

Service in the Bundeswehr is based on law. By obeying the law, leaders teach their soldiers proper conduct. Commanders with legal authority bear special responsibility in this respect. With their disciplinary powers, they exert a considerable influence on the sense of

justice of soldiers. Obedience of the law fosters trust and mutual respect. The required knowledge of law is provided in legal courses.³⁵

On missions abroad, soldiers must be aware at all times of the importance and effect of observing international law and the rules of engagement. Military discipline is the basis of life in a military community and a guiding principle for the conduct of soldiers. It complies with military law. Military discipline is geared to military tasks, promotes self-confidence, and fosters cohesion and comradeship. It is maintained by the leadership behavior and personal example of leaders. Military discipline secures the "moral high ground" in a tough ethical environment where values are violated by the adversary.³⁶

In line with the principles of *Innere Führung*, superiors are granted leeway to reduce the conflict between maximum personal freedom and the limitations of military discipline. Soldiers must stay informed about changes to laws and regulations. Leaders must fully inform their subordinate elements about such changes. As a military leadership principle, participation means involvement in decision-making processes. Participation reflects in a special way the guiding principle of the "citizen in uniform". The objective of participation is a responsible cooperation between disciplinary superiors and their subordinates. However, leaders retain full responsibility for command and control. The formal participation of soldiers takes place either through local spokespeople or their committees in accordance with the Military Personnel Representation Act or through personnel representatives at agencies where soldiers are represented by a staff council in accordance with the Federal Personnel Representation Act in conjunction with the Military Personnel Representation Act. Soldiers who exercise their appeal, input, petition or other rights must not be disadvantaged.³⁷ This seems to be contradictory to military efficiency, however,

participation of soldiers does not only challenge the leader; it also strengthens personal judgment of soldiers.

Mission Command and Judgment

The roots of mission command and control lay far away from a democratic state order in the nineteenth century. The principal of mission command and control does not lead to or automatically support an ethical behavior.³⁸ The inner value of mission command and control is defined by the political system that implements and practices it. An ethical set of values at all levels of command is sine qua non to practice mission command and control. The concept of Innere Fuehrung is taking this into account though it emphasizes and strengthens judgment of the individual. Consequently, it is essential to educate soldiers and let them exercise their personal judgment. Precondition is a maximum of freedom that stipulates and stimulates personal judgment.³⁹

The operational environment in Afghanistan and in counterinsurgency operations in general calls for personal judgment of every soldier. The military forces operate in small units under the command of junior leaders amongst the people. There are no clear criteria to distinguish between good and evil, between friend and enemy. It is the soldier with a clear mind and a finger on the trigger who has to make the decision based on his judgment within a blink of an eye if the situation demands “words” or “bullets.” In broader context, the result of the soldier’s judgment can endanger the overall mission. Therefore, soldiers need an understanding of the context of their mission in order to come to an appropriate judgment. Soldiers have to be aware of the political dimension and the reach of their actions.⁴⁰ If soldiers are unfamiliar with

that kind of responsibility, this uncertainty is a heavy burden for them. Being aware of and familiar with such situations lifts this burden and makes soldiers comfortable.

Gaining Trust - The Essence of Counterinsurgency

“Winning hearts and minds of the population” is the metaphor for one essential precondition of a successful counterinsurgency operation. However, the expression means nothing else than gaining the trust of the local population within the operational environment.⁴¹ Similar to good leadership that intends to gain the trust of subordinates as a precondition for a professional command relationship, the trust of the population in the foreign military and government is essential to achieve their support in fighting the insurgents. To gain the trust of the population it is necessary to be reliable and measurable within service’s set of values.⁴² This set of values is the same for what the forces are depicted to fight for. To be credible, the military has to set an example in their behavior, similar to superiors, soldiers have to exemplify and communicate the values to the local population. Such a behavior cannot be trained in a short period prior to a mission. In order to act morally, moral values must be practiced and promoted in a soldier’s daily routine. The concept of Innere Fuehrung set the framework for creating an environment where this experience can be made. Therefore, the concept of Innere Führung also has an external effect.

Concept and Practice – Innere Fuehrung in Practice

Report of the Parliamentary Commissioner “Wehrbeauftragter”

Daily frictions of reality however reminds that up to this point it was a description of the concept as outlined in its central field manual. The annual report of the parliamentary

commissioner of the armed forces constitutes a valuable source for the lesser publicly known frictions and sometimes willful committed injustices resulting from unacceptable hardships in the daily routine.⁴³ This report however, is more than a mere listing of sensations as some tend to read the given examples. Some of the prominently described events most commonly provoke a “how could they.” The ability to see these bad examples in this very sense partially is credited to the existence of Innere Fuehrung.

ISAF 2006

In spring 2003, a few German soldiers in Afghanistan posed in a more than disgusting way with human skulls they discovered at lime field where parts of human skeletons were easy accessible.⁴⁴ When these photos surfaced in a high circulation German tabloid in 2006 the details were not known and the first impression was that the Bundeswehr repeatedly desecrated graves. The public outcry and the inherent calls for harsh consequences were a logical consequence. The fact that the pictures were taken on farmland rather than on a graveyard may be of a small consolation, but it was revealed after the investigations of the public prosecutor’s office. Even if no laws were broken and again singular culprits were identified, the damage was enormous. The majority of the soldiers involved were court-martialed for having endangered the security of the German forces in Afghanistan. What was even more disappointing was the fact that those critics claiming that the Bundeswehr was mentally not ready for such operations in Afghanistan seemed to be right. Innere Fuehrung was in the line of fire.

It is not the intention here to redefine or turn negative events into positive looking aspects. Innere Fuehrung did not prevent these scandals. Yet it is calming and reassuring once

such scandals were discovered they were taken care of in a thorough civilian prosecution as well as it always had additional dire military consequences and disciplinary actions ranging from a promotion stop to degradation or in the worst case for the person a discharge in addition to the civil law consequences.

In the face of the repeated demonstration of Innere Fuehrung at work, the of question whether the concept is a cold theory that collides with messy reality can be answered in the negative. The concept is effective and accepted, however it is not a sure-fire success all the time. Military life can nonetheless lead to a neglect of this ideal in the hands of those who are not wholly committed to the task. Innere Fuehrung is based upon the values incorporated in the German Basic Law. This fact, however, does not imply that the Bundeswehr and its concept can immediately correct the failures of education of young citizens endured before joining the armed forces. In this case, the forces have to place more emphasis on civic education.

Conclusion

Innere Fuehrung emphasizes that a soldier is as a human being responsible for fulfilling his moral and legal obligations. The soldier's ability to meet the high demands at every level of modern operations is more crucial than ever. Technology gets a supporting role and not the central issue. The ability to trust in the individual soldier's competence and reliability becomes more and more important. Another finding is that this ability is a logical consequence of Innere Fuehrung correctly applied. Information superiority is enhanced by Innere Fuehrung and will automatically contribute towards the desired decision superiority. Innere Fuehrung is not the concept that sends lawyers or political advisors in the field. However, it is a concept that enables

the citizen in uniform to bring his knowledge into effect in accordance with military necessities. The question of good or bad, i.e. what is allowed or not must be part of the education a citizen already had before becoming a soldier. Innere Fuehrung enables and protects soldiers at the same time it helps soldiers to broaden their knowledge and attain further education.

Innere Fuehrung definitely is a process to develop leadership and this development is based education rather than on primarily military training. Innere Fuehrung as characteristic of German civil-military relationship protects the soldier and thus gives guidance how to treat these soldiers. Therefore, one of the main qualities of Innere Fuehrung is the guidance it can give as a universal concept where ethics, morale and soldierly philosophy complement one another. It provides guidance how a citizen in uniform can and is supposed to act as a responsible soldier in order to succeed in counterinsurgency operations. Where the situation is a map and education is the legend, Innere Fuehrung is the ethical compass that helps to guide the way.

Endnotes

- 1 Widder. Innere Fuehrung - official translation by the German services " leadership development and civic education" - is a side of Auftragstaktik (mission command and control (MCDP 6 Command and Control, mission tactics (MCDP 1- Warfighting), mission typ orders (MCPD 1-0 Marine Corps Operations)) one of the trademarks of German leadership.
- 2 Former Wehrmacht officers met at the "Eifelkloster Himmerod" in early October 1950 and the "Himmeroder Denkschrift" would become the blueprint for Germany's contribution to the defense of Western Europe. Martin Kutz, p. 42
- 3 Kutz, Martin, ed. Gesellschaft, Militär, Krieg und Frieden im Denken von Wolf Graf von Baudessin. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft. Baden-Baden: 2004. 117
- 4 Bundesministerium der Verteidigung. Innere Führung. ZDv 10/1. Bonn: Führungsstab der Streitkräfte, Januar 28, 2008. No. 401
- 5 Kutz, Martin, ed. Gesellschaft, Militär, Krieg und Frieden im Denken von Wolf Graf von Baudessin. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft. Baden-Baden: 2004. 181 ZDv 10/1 No. 402
- 6 ZDv 10/1 No. 602
- 7 Other areas of application of Innere Fuehrung are: service and training, information activities, organisation and personnel management, morale and welfare activities, compatibility of family and service, religious support and the practice of religion and medical care.
- 8 United States. The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24 : Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. 7-1
- 9 Ibid. 7-2
- 10 Robert Thompson. "Defeating Communist Insurgency." New York: Preager, 1966. P. 61
- 11 Krulak, Charles C. *The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War*. Marines Magazine, January, 1999.
- 12 United States. The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24 : Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.7-5
- 13 Ibid. 7-9
- 14 United States. *Small-Unit Leader's Guide to Counterinsurgency*. [Quantico, VA]: U.S. Marine Corps, 2006. 25
- 15 Bundesministerium der Verteidigung. Innere Führung. ZDv 10/1. Bonn: Führungsstab der Streitkräfte, Januar 28, 2008. No. 601
- 16 Ibid. No. 603
- 17 The original German quotation "Wer Menschenwürde verteidigt, muss Menschen würdig behandeln" was coined by Court Baudessin one of the founding fathers of the concept of Innere Fuehrung. Ibid. No. 604
- 18 Ibid. No. 605.
- 19 Ibid. No. 611
- 20 Hagen, Ulrich von, ed. *Armee in der Demokratie. Zum Verhältnis von zivilen und militärischen Prinzipien*. Wiesbaden: VS-Verlag, 2006. 141
- 21 ZDv 10/1. No. 613
- 22 Ibid. No. 614
- 23 United States. The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24 : Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. 7-7

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- 24 ZDV 10/1. No. 617
- 25 Ibid. No. 620
- 26 Ibid. No. 624
- 27 Kutz, Martin, ed. *Gesellschaft, Militär, Krieg und Frieden im Denken von Wolf Graf von Baudessin*. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft. Baden-Baden: 2004. 179
- 28 ZDV 10/1. No. 625
- 29 For a quotation of § 33 German Legal Status of Military Personnel Act see Appendix B.
- 30 United States. *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24 : Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. 7-9
- 31 ZDV 10/1. No. 628
- 32 Ibid. No. 633
- 33 Ibid. No. 634
- 34 United States. *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24 : Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. 7-16
- 35 ZDV 10/1. No. 635
- 36 United States. *The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual: U.S. Army Field Manual No. 3-24 : Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3-33.5*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. 7-10
- 37 ZDV 10/1. No. 640.
- 38 Hagen, Ulrich von, ed. *Armee in der Demokratie. Zum Verhältnis von zivilen und militärischen Prinzipien*. Wiesbaden: VS-Verlag, 2006. 141
- 39 Kutz, Martin, ed. *Gesellschaft, Militär, Krieg und Frieden im Denken von Wolf Graf von Baudessin*. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft. Baden-Baden: 2004. 184
- 40 Mattis, James N., Frank G. Hoffman. *Future Warfare. The Rise of Hybrid Wars*. Proceeding. November 2005. 19
- 41 Marston, Daniel, and Carter Malkasian. *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*. Oxford: Osprey, 2008. 128
- ⁴² United States. *Small-Unit Leader's Guide to Counterinsurgency*. [Quantico, VA]: U.S. Marine Corps, 2006. 29
- 43 The creation of this parliamentary commissioner is based on the Scandinavian example. According Art 45 of the German Basic Law the German Parliament elects the parliamentary commissioner (Wehrbeauftragte) as an organ to protect the basic rights of the soldiers in the Bundeswehr. This is guaranteed by the right for any soldier to contact this parliamentary commissioner without being obliged to stick to the line of command. The parliamentary commissioner publishes an annual report concerning amongst others matters of Innere Führung.
- 44 "Schnelle Aufklärung." ZEIT ONLINE 25.10.2006. <http://www.zeit.de/online/2006/43/Reaktionen> accessed May 11, 2008.

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Appendix A

RANGE OF MILITARY OPERATIONS			
Military Operations		General US Goals	Representative Examples
COMBAT	War	Fight & Win	<u>Large Scale Combat Operations</u> Attack / Defend / Blockade
	NONCOMBAT	Deter War & Resolve Conflict	Peace Enforcement Counterterrorism Show of Force/Raid/Strike Peacekeeping/NEO Nation Assistance Counterinsurgency
		Promote Peace & Support US Civil Authorities	Freedom of Navigation Counterdrug Humanitarian Assistance Protection of Shipping US Civil Support

(Source: United States. Department of Defense. September 10, 2001. *Joint Publication 3-0*

Joint Operations http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/doctrine/genesis_and_evolution/source_materials

[/dod_joint_ops_doctrine.pdf](#))

Appendix B

German Legal Status of Military Personnel Act

(Soldiers Act, Soldatengesetz)

§ 33 Staatsbürgerlicher und völkerrechtlicher Unterricht¹

(1) Die Soldaten erhalten staatsbürgerlichen und völkerrechtlichen Unterricht. Der für den Unterricht verantwortliche Vorgesetzte darf die Behandlung politischer Fragen nicht auf die Darlegung einer einseitigen Meinung beschränken. Das Gesamtbild des Unterrichts ist so zu gestalten, dass die Soldaten nicht zu Gunsten oder zu Ungunsten einer bestimmten politischen Richtung beeinflusst werden.

(2) Die Soldaten sind über ihre staatsbürgerlichen und völkerrechtlichen Pflichten und Rechte im Frieden und im Krieg zu unterrichten.

§ 33 Civic education and education on international law²

(1) The soldiers will receive civic education and education on international law. The military leader in charge for the education must not present political issues of a one-sided opinion only. The overall teaching of the soldiers must not influence to the benefit or detriment to a particular political direction.

(2) The soldiers are to teach on their civic and international legal obligations and rights, in peace time and in war.

¹ Bundesministerium der Justiz. Gesetz über die Regelung der Rechtsstellung der Soldaten (Soldatengesetz). <http://bundesrecht.juris.de/bundesrecht/sg/gesamt.pdf> (accessed: December 18, 2008).

² Nonofficial translation by the author.

United States ¹				Germany ²
Air Force	Army	Navy & Marine Corps	Coast Guard	Armed Forces
Integrity first Service before self Excellence in all we do	Loyalty Duty Respect Selfless Service Honor Integrity Personal Courage	Honor Courage Commitment	Honor Respect Devotion to duty	Brave Loyal and conscientious Comradely and considerate Disciplined Competent and willing to learn Truthful to themselves and to others Fair, tolerant and open to other cultures Able to distinguish right from wrong conduct

Service Values United States - Germany

Appendix C

¹ United States. *The Armed Forces Officer*. Washington, DC: Joint Staff, Operational Plans and Joint Force Development Directorate (J-7), 2006. <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/education/armedforcesofficer.pdf>, p. 143

² Bundesministerium der Verteidigung. *Innere Führung*. ZDv 10/1. Bonn: Führungsstab der Streitkräfte, Januar 28, 2008, p. 19

